

## *Talking Your Way Through Conflict*

1. Someone is the facilitator. This person is impartial and manages the discussion so that both parties can tell their stories without interruption. The facilitator is in charge. Someone from another class who is not known to the people who are in disagreement would be a good choice. This person needs to be taken through the procedure carefully by a teacher first. The facilitator needs to understand how to reflect back to the parties what they are hearing to check it out, "What I think you are saying is . . . Is that right?" "Joe, did you hear what Ben was saying?" The facilitator needs to understand how to use open questions. Go over the use of "I" statements.
2. The teacher should be on hand in case of problems, but should not take over. Note that this kind of conflict resolution activity is not appropriate where one person feels unsafe, for example if bullying is involved. Refer to the school's behavior management policy in this kind of circumstance.
3. Each party in the conflict is bound by the rules of the negotiation. They must agree to these rules before they begin. The rules are:
  - each person has an allotted time to tell the story of what the conflict is about
  - what is talked about remains confidential, "What's said within these walls stays within these walls."
  - to listen to the other person without interrupting them (people should write notes if they want to make a comment on what the other person is saying)
  - the facilitator helps people to tell their stories by asking questions like: What happened then? How did you feel? They are not to make comments on what is said
  - there are to be no put-downs
  - the parties are to aim to come to some kind of resolution of the conflict within the time set; if none is reached, they must agree to meet again for further negotiation.
4. Emphasize the importance of tone of voice and showing respect for the other person's opinion.
5. The process could be practised by the whole class in groups of three role playing some hypothetical disagreements.
6. Next, ask students to work in pairs on the worksheet **Now for Negotiation** (p. 62). Each section has been partially completed; they should negotiate together to complete the sections to come up with a complete negotiation process that they think would work for resolving conflicts.
7. Use the process in class on a regular basis so that students become familiar with it.



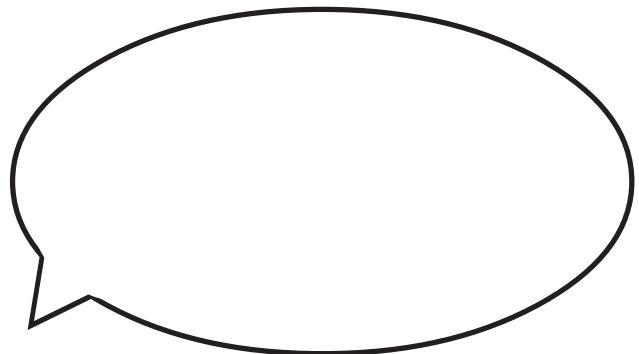
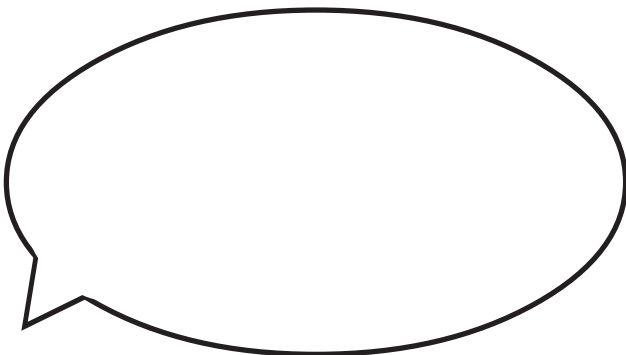
# Say What You Mean



Using these words will give you the power to tell people how you feel and what you want to happen.

- **I feel** (describe how you feel)
- **When** (describe what has happened)
- **Because** (say why this makes you feel that way)
- **I would like** (what do you want to change?)
- **Or** (what will you do if it doesn't change?)

I **feel** really angry **when** you tease me **because** it does not respect my feelings and **I would like** it if you stopped saying those things **or** I will have to go and tell a teacher.





# Resolution Framework



What is the problem?

How am I feeling?

How can I calm down?

What choices for resolving the conflict do you have that will have a good consequence?

**Choice 1**

**Consequence**

**Choice 2**

**Consequence**

**Which is your preferred choice?**

**Why?**



# Now for Negotiation



In a calm and friendly way you can solve arguments by negotiation.

## **A. LISTEN WITHOUT INTERRUPTING**

- Ask the other person what they consider the problem to be.
- Ask them how they are feeling.
- Say what you consider the problem to be.
- Say how you are feeling.

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## **B. TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES**

- Take turns to ask questions.

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## **C. RESOLVE THE ISSUES**

- Say what you will do to resolve the issue.

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## **D. ACTION AGREEMENT**

- If you both agreed do what you said you would do.

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### **DISAGREEMENT DECISIONS**

- If you can't agree start from the beginning or get a facilitator to help you work through the process again.